

METHODS, SYSTEMS, AND MEDIA FOR ACQUIRING RATINGS FOR POINTS OF INTEREST

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

5 [0001] This application is related to U.S. Patent Application Serial No. _____, entitled "METHODS, SYSTEMS, AND MEDIA FOR PROVIDING A LOCATION-BASED SERVICE FOR ANOTHER LOCATION", attorney docket number AUS920031011US1, filed on the same day, the disclosure of which is incorporated herein in its entirety for all purposes.

FIELD OF INVENTION

10 [0002] The present invention is in the field of rating locations, establishments, or other points of interest. More particularly, the present invention relates to methods, systems, and media for providing rating information, such as user ratings, related to a particular location, such as a location selected by a user that is different than the current location of the user.

BACKGROUND

20 [0003] Frequently, people need to locate a nearby business establishment, tourist destination or other point of interest. A business traveler or tourist, for example, might be visiting a new city and be looking for a restaurant or hotel within walking distance of his or her present location. Similarly, someone could come upon a restaurant that has an excessively long wait and desire to find a nearby comparable restaurant. In another example, a tourist, having
25 visited one historical site, might desire to find other tourist sites that would be easy to visit from the present location. When faced with a plethora of choices, people generally prefer to have some sort of guidance as to which place to visit.

[0004] In addition, people in strange locations often become disoriented or lost. This
30 problem is even more prevalent when the terrain of any area makes it more difficult to see the

area around the person. For example, urban environments can be confusing, particularly if a person is in a tunnel, near large skyscrapers, etc. Rural or other environments have similar problems because of trees, landforms, etc. Moreover, many people have an inadequate sense of direction and have little idea what direction they are facing.

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[0005] Currently, many people rely on printed guidebooks to find nearby restaurants, businesses, tourist sites, or other points of interest. In particular, people desire to have ratings or reviews of these points of interest. Reviews and ratings from guidebooks, however, suffer from a number of failings. Information from guidebooks is often notoriously stale and out-of-date.

10 Guidebooks also require that a person have advance knowledge of where they are going to be so that they could acquire the appropriate guidebook. For many people, advance knowledge of where they are going to be during, say, lunch time is difficult to achieve. Another failing of these methods is that they all require the person seeking an establishment or point of interest know where they are on an incomplete and often inaccurate map. For example, to properly use a
15 guidebook, a person must know which map in the guidebook to use – which requires knowledge of the person’s present location. For the tourist or business traveler in a strange location, this information may not be readily available. Further, many guidebooks feature or favor restaurants or other establishments that advertise with the guidebook, resulting in bias and/or inaccuracies.

20 [0006] Many people also use information from the World Wide Web (“WWW”) if they desire to find out information about a new place. While websites – sometimes – can provide more up-to-date information than printed guidebooks, they are still subject to the same detriments as guidebooks – a person has to know where they are, there is a possibility of bias or inaccuracies, etc. In addition, information on the WWW is incomplete at best, resulting in many
25 locations having little or no reliable information and has not generally been available to persons when they away from their home or office.

[0007] On the other hand, the use of mobile devices, such as wireless or cellular telephones, to transmit, access, and receive information has become ubiquitous. Because of the

highly competitive nature of the mobile phone industry, many manufacturers or providers desire to increase the functionality of the mobile phones so as to increase their desirability in the eyes of consumers. One common method of making a mobile phone service more desirable is to deliver content to the user of the mobile phone. However, content delivered to mobile phones under current systems often lacks significant value to consumers, as it's limited in value, timeliness, and flexibility. For instance, mobile phones may have a limited ability to search and sort through information provided on the WWW but that limited ability simply exacerbates the problems related to using the WWW for obtaining information about points of interest.

[0008] Even if the available rating information was easily accessible, much of the ratings or reviews information are less than desirable because the raters do not reflect the preferences of the "average" person. Many restaurant reviews, for example, are written by professional reviewers who may have different tastes than most of the readers of the reviews. Moreover, many available ratings are impacted by whether the establishment being rated advertised with the reviewer, resulting in either a subtle bias towards that establishment or even the failure to find establishments unwilling to pay for advertising. Moreover, most reviews do not provide significant details about the point of interest and do not provide detailed reviews of detailed aspects of the operation, such as service, cost, etc.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] The problems identified above are in large part addressed by methods, systems, and media for providing rating information related to a particular location. One embodiment provides a method for providing ratings related to a location different than the current location of a user. Another embodiment provides a method for requesting rating information associated with a particular location. The method generally includes determining a current location of a user via a position-determining device; interacting with the user to determine the particular location based upon the current location, in response to an inquiry from the user about the rating information associated with the particular location, wherein the interacting comprises receiving differential information indicative of a distance between the current location and the particular

location from the user; transmitting the particular location to a wireless network to request the rating information; displaying, upon receipt of the rating information from the wireless network, at least part of the rating information to the user. Alternative embodiments further comprise determining a compass direction between the current location and the particular location.

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[0010] Another embodiment provides an apparatus for requesting rating information associated with a particular location. The apparatus contemplates a position determining device for determining a current location; a compass; a user interface for receiving input from a user located at the current location, wherein the user input comprises differential information indicating a distance between the current location and the particular location; a transmitter for transmitting the particular location to a wireless network to request rating information related to the particular location; a receiver for receiving from a wireless network rating information related to the particular location; and a display device to display the rating information to the user.

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[0011] A further embodiment provides a machine-accessible medium containing instructions, which when executed by a machine, cause said machine to perform operations. The operations can involve determining a current location of a user via a position-determining device; interacting with the user to determine the particular location based upon the current location, in response to an inquiry from the user about the rating information associated with the particular location, wherein the interacting comprises receiving differential information indicative of a distance between the current location and the particular location from the user; transmitting the particular location to a wireless network to request the rating information; displaying, upon receipt of the rating information from the wireless network, at least part of the rating information to the user.

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[0012] One embodiment provides a method for providing ratings related to a location different than the current location of a user. The method generally involves receiving a request from a user located at a current location for rating information related to a particular location,

wherein the request comprises an indication of the current location; receiving differential information from the user, the differential information describing the particular location relative to the current location; determining the particular location based upon the differential information and the indication of the current location; retrieving rating information relating to the particular location; and transmitting to a user the rating information relating to the particular location.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0013] Other objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent upon reading the following detailed description and upon reference to the accompanying drawings in which like references may indicate similar elements:

- FIG 1 depicts an embodiment for a system for requesting, receiving, and providing rating information;
- FIG 2 depicts a schematic view of an apparatus according to one embodiment, including a position determining system and a compass;
- FIG 3 depicts a flow chart for requesting and receiving rating information related to a particular location according to one embodiment; and
- FIG 4 depicts a flow chart for providing rating information related to a particular location according to one embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF EMBODIMENTS

[0014] The following is a detailed description of example embodiments of the invention depicted in the accompanying drawings. The example embodiments are in such detail as to clearly communicate the invention. However, the amount of detail offered is not intended to limit the anticipated variations of embodiments, but, on the contrary, the intention is to cover all modifications, equivalents, and alternatives falling within the spirit and scope of the present

invention as defined by the appended claims. The detailed descriptions below are designed to make such embodiments obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art.

[0015] Generally speaking, methods, systems, and media to provide ratings related to a location, such as a location different than the current location of a user, are contemplated. Embodiments include hardware and/or software for receiving input from a user located at a current location, including differential information indicating a distance between the current location and a second, different location, determining the current location, and determining the particular location based on the current location and the differential information. In one embodiment, the particular location is transmitted to a wireless network, and rating information related to the particular location is received from a wireless network. Some or all of the rating information related to the particular location may be displayed to the user. In an alternative embodiment, the differential information and the current location are transmitted to a wireless network instead of the particular location.

[0016] Turning now to the drawings, FIG 1 depicts one embodiment of a system 100 for providing rating information related to a particular location. More specifically, system 100 may facilitate a user located at a current location requesting and/or receiving rating information related to a second, different location. System 100 also provides rating information related to a particular location to a user at a current location based on a request from the user. The rating information may include ratings of points of interest related to the particular location, such as ratings of points of interest in geographical proximity to the particular location, of a similar type, of a certain quality of rating, etc.

[0017] System 100 includes a wireless device 102, a wireless network 104, and a rating information system 106. System 100 also optionally includes a telephone network 108 or other network 110 in communication with wireless network 104. Wireless device 102 is a mobile communication device, such as a wireless phone, that is adapted to communicate wirelessly via a wireless network 104. In one embodiment, the wireless device 102 may communicate with a

base station as part of the wireless network **104**, which in turn is in communication with a mobile switching center, gateway mobile switching center (“GMSC”), or other elements of a wireless or cellular network. In one embodiment, a wireless network **104** communicates with a telephone network **108** (or other wireless or cellular networks) via a GMSC. A wireless network **104**, in one embodiment, communicates with the Internet or other network **110** using the Wireless Access Protocol (“WAP”) via a WAP gateway, which translates between the protocols of the WWW and the WAP protocols of wireless devices **102**.

[0018] Rating information system **106** provides rating information on multiple points of interest based on a particular location. The rating information system **106** may include a computer system, such as a server, with storage capability. In one embodiment, rating information system **106** includes a computer system such as an IBM eServer™ having one or more processors, or threads of processors, executing software and/or one or more state machines coupled with data storage devices such as random access memory (RAM), read only memory (ROM), flash memory, compact disc drives, hard drives, and the like. Software executing on the rating information system **106** may be adapted to receive and respond to a request for rating information related to a location. The rating information system **106** may communicate with wireless network **104** directly, through telephone network **108**, or through another network **110**, such as the Internet.

[0019] Wireless device **102** includes a position determining system **112** and a compass **114**. Position determining system **112** may include hardware and/or software capable of determining the present location of the position determining system **112**, and, thus, the present location of the wireless device **102**. In one embodiment, position determining system **112** is a global positioning system (“GPS”) receiver integrated into the wireless device **102**. In another embodiment, position determining system **112** is an add-on or aftermarket GPS receiver adapted to be connected to wireless device **102**. One of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that other position determining systems such as inertial measurement units are contemplated.

[0020] Compass 114 may include hardware and/or software to determine a compass direction. In one embodiment, compass 114 is a digital compass integrated with the wireless device 102. Digital compass 114 could, in one embodiment, use an existing display of the wireless device 102 to display output. Alternatively, digital compass 114 could have a dedicated display or graphical interface or no user display at all. In another embodiment, compass 114 is a traditional magnetic compass that optionally provides output directly to the wireless device 102.

[0021] In some embodiments of system 100, if a user of a wireless device 102 desires to acquire rating information about a particular location 118, the user would point wireless device 102 in the direction of particular location 118. Compass 114 would determine the direction in which particular location 118 lies. User, in one embodiment, would input an estimated distance 122 to the particular location 118 using the user interface 116 of the wireless device 102. The current location of the wireless device 102 is calculated by the position determining system 112. When the current location, direction to the particular location 118, and estimated distance 122 to the particular location 118 are known, the particular location 118 can be calculated. The estimated distance 122 may be entered via a keypad, pull-down menus among a selection of distances, push-screen input, or any user input 116 methodology or any other fashion.

[0022] Once the particular location 118 is known, the user can then receive rating information related to that particular location 118. The ability to receive rating information about a particular location 118 provides a number of advantages. In one situation, the particular location 118 may not be physically accessible by the user, such as if there was a physical impediment to reaching the particular location (e.g., lake, cliff, mountain side, traffic blockage, etc.). Another situation might occur if a user desires information about a particular location 118 that the user is heading towards or will soon be near. In this situation, a user may see a small town across a lake and desire to know whether there are any good restaurants nearby. Another example is if a user is on a ferry and heading towards a downtown area of a city and wants to locate highly-rated service establishments, such as a gym or masseuse. Yet another example is a user in an automobile who is running out of gas or having car trouble who may desire to know of

service stations located at a service station at the next exit ten miles ahead. To get rating information about a second, different location **118**, a user could point a wireless device **102** towards the particular location **118**, input an estimated distance **122**, and receive rating information related to the particular location **118**. Thus, the user having automobile trouble
5 could point his wireless device **102** down the highway, enter an estimated distance **122** of ten miles, and receive rating information about that exit off the highway, such as the highest rated or closest service stations or repair centers. One of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that many other embodiments are contemplated.

10 **[0023]** Rating information system **106** may provide rating information related to a particular location **118**. Rating information related to a particular location may include virtually any type of information about points of interest **120** that are somehow related to the particular location **118**. In one example, the particular location **118** might be a corner of a city block. The rating information could be, say, ratings of restaurants within a five block radius. Each
15 restaurant in this example would be a point of interest **120**, and each would be related to the particular location **118** by being within five blocks of the particular location. When this rating information is transmitted ultimately to the user of the wireless device **102**, the user could then choose a restaurant in the area of the particular location **118** based on the rating information.

20 **[0024]** Points of interest **120** may include any type of entity or establishment to be rated, such as retail stores, restaurants, companies, service stations, movie theaters, service establishments (e.g., masseuse, gyms, etc.), etc. Points of interest **120** may also include any type of location, such as tourist destinations, scenic points, historical sites, parks, etc. Areas or regions may also be points of interest **120**, such as neighborhoods, park areas, etc.

25 **[0025]** Points of interest are related to the particular location **118** in some way. Geographical proximity, for example, can relate a point of interest **120** to the particular location **118**. For example, related points of interest **120** could include all points of interest **120** within a certain distance (e.g., measured in linear distance, time, city blocks, etc.), within line of sight of

the particular location, within a travel time of the particular location (e.g., within a five minute walk or drive, etc.), etc. Travel time from the particular location **118** may serve as an indication for estimated distance **122**. Points of interest **120** can be related to the particular location **118** by the type of point of interest **120**. In one embodiment, a point of interest **120** could be located at the particular location **118**, and related points of interest **120** could include similar points of interest **120** to the one at the particular location **118**. If an Italian restaurant is a point of interest **120** and is located at the particular location **118**, for example, other nearby restaurants or Italian restaurants (or Italian/Greek restaurants) may be points of interest **120** for which rating information would be available.

[0026] In one embodiment, users of wireless devices **102** may define preferences as to which points of interest **120** would be considered related to the particular location **118**. Users could specify, as one example, that only rating information about points of interest **120** within seven blocks of the particular location **118** should be retrieved. A user could exclude a type of point of interest **120** they do not prefer, such as, say, Thai restaurants. Users could also specify a preference that only rating information about points of interest **120** with a certain level of rating (e.g., four-star restaurants and above) are retrieved. One of ordinary skill the art will recognize that a user could define any type of preference for which points of interest **120** will be related.

[0027] Rating information may also include a wide variety of information about the points of interest **120**. Rating information includes some type of rating of the point of interest, such as a rating by critics, users, other individuals, proprietors, the requesting user, etc. Moreover, the rating information could include any other details about the point of interest **120**, such as address, phone number, universal resource locator, operating hours, description, etc. In one example, rating information about a restaurant could include operating hours and a menu, and could also include sub-ratings about particular items on the menu. Sub-ratings are ratings of particular aspects of a rated point of interest **120**, and could be used for particular servers, products, menu items, service, cleanliness, price, speed of operating, etc.

[0028] When rating information about points of interest 120 is delivered to a user, the particular points of interest 120 are ranked in one embodiment. The points of interest 120, for example, could be ranked based on proximity to the particular location 118, with the closest ones being ranked higher. Ranking of points of interest can also be done based upon user preferences (e.g., user prefers Indian restaurants so they are displayed first), user or other ratings (e.g., higher ranked establishments rated higher), cost, hours/availability, overall match to the user's request, advertising or other support received from the point of interest 120, etc. One of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that any, all or none of these ranking systems and any others are possible and contemplated.

[0029] In one embodiment, rating information includes user-provided rating information about points of interest. In this embodiment, ratings of points of interest 120 are based on input provided by individuals who have visited the points of interest 120. For example, the ratings for a restaurant would include ratings from individuals who have recently dined at that restaurant. Ratings can be portrayed in any fashion, such as averages, medians, highest and lowest rating, etc. In one embodiment, greater weight can be given to some reviews, such as ratings that are more recent, from individuals with similarities to the requesting user, etc. In another embodiment, individuals may rate different aspects of a point of interest 120 (sub-ratings such as food quality and service at a restaurant) and a total rating for that point of interest 120 could take into account any or all of the sub-ratings. User-provided rating information provides a number of advantages over other types of ratings, such as those provided by critics or professional reviewers. One advantage to user-provided ratings is that they may provide a more accurate or more valuable rating to the average user of a wireless device 102. For many people, ratings by other similar people may be more valuable to them than those provided by critics or professional reviews. Another advantage is that user-provided ratings may be more up-to-date than other ratings. In one example, a user could find ratings of a restaurant from the current week or even of that night's special in trying to decide where to go for dinner. The immediacy of user-provided ratings is desirable to many people. Another potential advantage of user-provided

ratings is the perceived lack of bias in those ratings. Without advertising or pressure from an employer, individuals are free to rate a point of interest **120** however they would like.

[0030] Using the user interface **116**, users may input ratings for points of interest **120**.

5 In one embodiment, when a user inputs a rating, the user's current position can be determined using the position determining system **112**. The nearest point of interest **120** to the user's current position can be, given the accuracy of GPS receivers, considered to be what the user is rating. In an alternative embodiment, a user could be presented a few nearby choices, from which the user would select the one for which they desire to provide a rating. The contributions of a plurality of
10 users can be collected to provide rating information for a particular point of interest **120**. Input of new ratings by a user should be made as simple as possible so as to encourage ratings.

[0031] In one embodiment, the user interface **116** should be as simple as possible. In one embodiment, the user can simply push existing buttons to fill out a form on their wireless device
15 **102**. The form, for example, could simply have options to enter differential information (such as a distance), type of point of interest **120** (such as restaurants), and an optional request button (to begin the process of requesting rating information). The form could be stored on the wireless device **102** itself, or could be delivered to the wireless device upon request via the wireless network. As bandwidth is often very important, it is usually optimal to store the form on the
20 wireless device. As wireless devices **102** often have difficult user interfaces **116**, minimizing the frequency and level of user input will likely increase user satisfaction and usage.

[0032] In one embodiment, users may be provided free or discounted wireless devices
25 **102** in exchange for their use and input. For example, the users could be required to rate a certain number of points of interest **120** per month in order to keep their wireless device **120**. This may provide a large number of motivated raters to improve the overall system **100**. Businesses or other establishments could subsidize the service in this embodiment in exchange for advertising, preferential ratings (being careful to minimize any bias), etc.

[0033] Referring now to FIG 2, there is shown a schematic view of a wireless device **102** according to one embodiment, including a position determining system and a compass. Wireless device **102** may include a wireless interface **202**, a display **204**, a processor **206**, a position determining system **112**, a user interface **116**, memory **208**, a compass **114**, and an antenna **210**.

5 Wireless interface **202** includes hardware and/or software to transmit and receive information from a wireless network **104**. The wireless interface **202** works with optional antenna **210** to transmit and receive signals. Wireless device **102** includes a processor **206** and optional memory **208** for performing functions, storing user preferences, etc. Processor **206** may be used to perform necessary tasks for the wireless device **102**, such as calculations, handling the various
10 subsystems, etc. In some embodiments, one processor **206** is used for execution of instructions; in other embodiments, one or more processors or threads of processor(s) **206** may execute instructions. Memory **160** may include random access memory (RAM) such as double data rate (DDR) synchronous dynamic RAM (SDRAM), caches, buffers, read only memory (ROM); flash memory, and/or remote data storage like magnetic disk storage media, optical storage media, and
15 flash memory drives.

[0034] As described in relation to FIG 1, wireless device **102** may be any mobile communication device that is adapted to communicate wirelessly with a wireless network **104**. In one embodiment, wireless device **102** is a mobile phone, but other wireless devices such as
20 wireless-enabled pagers, personal digital assistants, an automotive-based wireless device, a Bluetooth-enabled device, etc., may also be used.

[0035] Wireless device **102** may include a display **204** and user interface **116**. Display **204** may be, for example, a display screen for displaying information, such as ratings for
25 restaurants or directions to the nearest five star restaurant, to the user. Any apparatus for conveying information to the user, such as a printer, is contemplated. User interface **116** may be any apparatus which accepts input from a user, such as buttons, dials, keys, keypad, levers, a voice recognition device, a device for accepting optical input, etc. In some embodiments, user

interface **116** utilizes existing input devices, such as a mobile phone's buttons, so as to not require additional complexity.

[0036] As described in relation to FIG 1, wireless device **102** includes a position
5 determining device **112**, such as a GPS receiver, and a compass **114**, such as a digital compass.
The position determining device **112** and compass **114** may be in communication with processor
206 so that processor **206** can handle directional and position information. In one embodiment,
compass **114** is configured so that when a user points the wireless device **102** in the direction of a
10 particular location **118**, the compass **114** provides directional information between the user's
current position and the particular location **118**. For example, if the user is pointing the wireless
device **102** due north, the compass **114** will indicate that the wireless device is pointing **102** due
north. In one embodiment, the wireless device **102** is marked in some way so as to indicate to
the user how to orient the wireless device **102** (e.g., antenna **210** pointing towards particular
15 location **118**) in order to provide the most accurate reading. Directional information, such as a
compass direction, may be any information that provides an indication of a difference in
direction, direction, angle of rotation, etc. between two locations or directions.

[0037] In one embodiment, a user could have a wireless device **102**, such as a wireless
phone, that is configured so that the user points the antenna **210** towards the particular location
20 **118** before requesting rating information for that particular location **118**. To request the rating
information, the user could select, for example, a ratings button on the user interface **116**. Here,
a user could point the antenna **210** towards, say, a building one mile away and select the ratings
button **116**. The system could then request that the user enter an estimated distance to the
particular location **118**. Alternatively, the user could point and hold the mobile device **102**
25 towards the particular location **118** building while entering an estimated distance **122**, where
entering an estimated distance serves also as the request for rating information. In this
embodiment, the compass reading would be based on the reading at the moment the request was
made. The user would then receive ratings information based on a particular location **118** one
mile away in the direction of the antenna **210** when the request was made.

[0038] Compass 114 may optionally provide an additional benefit to the user of the wireless device 102. Compass 114 can, obviously, provide a compass direction or other directional information to the user, helping orient the user when they are located in a strange place. Moreover, compass 114, particularly if it is a digital compass, may be able to integrate with either mapping or direction software to assist the user in finding their destination. For example, if a user desires to go to another location (say, an address), software could create directions from their current location to that new location, and the compass 114 could help guide the user in the right direction.

[0039] Referring now to FIG 3, there is shown an example of a flow chart 300 for a method for requesting and receiving rating information related to a location according to one embodiment. Flow chart 300 begins with element 302, receiving a request for rating information associated with a particular location. The request for rating information may be received from a user via a user interface 116, such as via a button on the wireless device 102. A user may also optionally supply preferences for rating information, as described in more detail in relation to FIG 1. In element 304, differential information is received from a user via a user interface 116. In one embodiment, differential information includes an estimated distance 122 between the user's current location and a particular location 118. An estimated distance could be in any type of units, such as feet, meters, miles or other distances, or other types of measurements, such as city blocks. In one alternative embodiment, input of differential information by a user is considered a request for rating information pursuant to element 302, thus performing elements 302 and 304 with one input from the user. The user may estimate distance based on any method, including guessing, use of signs or other information (e.g., road signs), or from a rangefinder. A rangefinder, such as a laser or infrared rangefinder, may be used to provide range distance to a user. In one alternative embodiment, differential information is received in element 304 directly from a rangefinder device instead of from user input.

[0040] After receiving a request for rating information, the system determines the current location in element 306. In one embodiment, the current location is determined by a position determining system 112, as described in relation to FIGS 1 and 2. The position determining system 112 may automatically (e.g., continually) calculate the current location or it may do so upon request. For the level of accuracy needed, positions calculated by the position determining device 112 reflect the position of the wireless device 102.

[0041] Element 310 illustrates a decision block based on whether the particular location 118 is calculated internally to the wireless device 102 (e.g., via the processor 206) or external to the wireless device 102. If the particular location 118 is calculated internally, the particular location is then determined in element 312. The particular location 118 is calculated based on the current position and the differential information. A second position can be calculated, for example, if a starting location, a compass direction, and a distance along that compass direction are known. In element 314, the request for rating information related to the particular location 118 is transmitted via a wireless network 104. In one embodiment, such as when the particular location 118 is determined internally, the particular location 118 is transmitted. In another embodiment, such as when the particular location 118 is not determined internally, the current position and differential information are both transmitted so that the particular location 118 can be determined later. When the particular location 118 is not determined internally, element 312 may be skipped.

[0042] Rating information related to the particular location 118 is then received via the wireless network 104 in element 316. The rating information may include ratings or other information about points of interest 120 located near the particular location 118 or otherwise related to the particular location 118. As described in more detail in relation to FIG 1, a wide variety of information may be included in the rating information. In element 318, the rating information is displayed to the user.

[0043] Referring now to FIG 4, there is shown an example of a flow chart **400** for a method for providing rating information related to a particular location according to one embodiment. Flow chart **400** begins with element **402**, receiving a request for rating information associated with a particular location **118**. The request for rating information is typically received from a wireless device **102** via a wireless network **104**. The location for which the request is made is the particular location **118**. The particular location **118** may be used to determine the appropriate rating information and points of interest **120**.

[0044] As flow chart **400** continues to element **404**, a split occurs depending on whether the wireless device **102** determines the particular location **118** or whether it simply receives it from the wireless device **102**. If the wireless device **102** determines the particular location **118**, the flow chart continues to element **406**, receiving the particular location **118** via the wireless network **104**. If the wireless device **102** does not determine the particular location **118**, the flow chart continues to element **408**, receiving the current location of the requestor. After receiving the differential information in element **410**, the function continues to element **412**, calculating the particular location **118**. The particular location **118** can be calculated, if necessary, using the current location of the requestor and the differential information.

[0045] After the particular location **118** is known (either from receiving it from the wireless device **102** or from determining it based on other information), the flowchart continues to element **414**, determine rating information based on the particular location **118**. This may be accomplished in a variety of ways. In several embodiments, the ratings information system **106** determines the rating information based on the particular location **118** it receives. In such embodiments, the ratings information system **106** may access a database that stores rating information. After the ratings information is determined, the ratings information is transmitted via the wireless network **104** in element **416** and flowchart **400** terminates.

[0046] One embodiment of the invention is implemented as a program product for use with a computer system such as, for example, the system **100** shown in FIG 1. The program

product could be used on a wireless device **102**, on a ratings information system **106**, or a combination thereof, or on other computer systems or processors. The program(s) of the program product defines functions of the embodiments (including the methods described herein) and can be contained on a variety of signal-bearing media. Illustrative signal-bearing media include, but are not limited to: (i) information permanently stored on non-writable storage media (e.g., read-only memory devices within a computer such as CD-ROM disks readable by a CD-ROM drive); (ii) alterable information stored on writable storage media (e.g., floppy disks within a diskette drive or hard-disk drive); and (iii) information conveyed to a computer by a communications medium, such as through a computer or telephone network, including wireless communications. The latter embodiment specifically includes information downloaded from the Internet and other networks. Such signal-bearing media, when carrying computer-readable instructions that direct the functions of the present invention, represent embodiments of the present invention.

[0047] In general, the routines executed to implement the embodiments of the invention, may be part of an operating system or a specific application, component, program, module, object, or sequence of instructions. The computer program of the present invention typically is comprised of a multitude of instructions that will be translated by the native computer into a machine-readable format and hence executable instructions. Also, programs are comprised of variables and data structures that either reside locally to the program or are found in memory or on storage devices. In addition, various programs described hereinafter may be identified based upon the application for which they are implemented in a specific embodiment of the invention. However, it should be appreciated that any particular program nomenclature that follows is used merely for convenience, and thus the invention should not be limited to use solely in any specific application identified and/or implied by such nomenclature.

[0048] It will be apparent to those skilled in the art having the benefit of this disclosure that the present invention contemplates methods, systems, and media for providing rating information related to a particular location, such as a location different than the current location

of a user. It is understood that the form of the invention shown and described in the detailed description and the drawings are to be taken merely as examples. It is intended that the following claims be interpreted broadly to embrace all the variations of the example embodiments disclosed.